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09/774,654	02/01/2001	Noriko Baba	WN-2288	8321
30743	7590	11/20/2003	EXAMINER	
WHITHAM, CURTIS & CHRISTOFFERSON, P.C.			CHEN, CHONGSHAN	
11491 SUNSET HILLS ROAD			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
SUITE 340			2172	
RESTON, VA 20190			DATE MAILED: 11/20/2003	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/774,654	BABA, NORIKO
	Examiner Chongshan Chen	Art Unit 2172

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication app ars on the cover sh et with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 October 2003.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1,3-10 and 12-19 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1,3-10 and 12-19 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to communications: Amendment C, filed on 23 October 2003.

This action is non-final. Claims 1, 3-10 and 12-19 are pending; claims 2 and 11 are canceled.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 3-10 and 12-19 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

3. Applicant's arguments, see page 8 "reference number is automatically generated", filed on 23 October 2003, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1, 3-10 and 12-19 under 103(a) have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Cole et al. ("Cole", 5,933,827).

Ishimaru doesn't explicitly disclose the reference number is automatically generated. Cole teaches the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result (Cole, col. 4, line 61- col. 5, line 7). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to automatically generate and record the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result in the system of Ishimaru. Automatically generating and recording reference number frees the user from the burden of manually entering reference number, and eliminates the possibility of human error involved in manually processing.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishimaru (6,427,155) in view of Cole et al. ("Cole", 5,933,827) and further in view of Porter, Jr. et al. ("Porter, Jr.", 5,263,160).

As per claim 1, Ishimaru discloses an electronic manual search system including an electronic manual which is composed of a plurality of parts, the system comprising:
an electronic manual composed of a plurality of topics ((Ishimaru, Fig. 2 & 10, col. 1, lines 61-65, According to the specification, electronic dictionary can be referred to as "electronic manual", part is referred to as "topic", page 2, 2nd & 3rd paragraph);
a reference number table which stores, for each topic, a reference number expressing how many times the topic has been referred to by a user (Ishimaru, Fig. 2 & 10, col. 9, lines 44-67, "provides an electronic dictionary that can inform users of the number of times a search has been performed");
a search process unit which searches contents of the parts based on a search condition (Ishimaru, Fig. 2);
a search result display unit which displays topics which resulted from the search process unit, in order based on the reference number (Ishimaru, col. 7, lines 64-65, "the words would be displayed on screen, sorted by search frequency in ascending or descending order").

Ishimaru doesn't explicitly disclose the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result, and the search process unit searches contents of each part in order based on the reference number. Cole teaches the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result (Cole, col. 4, line 61- col. 5, line 7). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to automatically generate and record the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result in the system of Ishimaru. Automatically generating and recording reference number frees the user from the burden of manually entering reference number, and eliminates the possibility of human error involved in manually processing.

Porter, Jr. discloses searching based on the order of record key (Porter, Jr., col. 1, lines 47-50). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to search based on the order of reference number in the system of Ishimaru. The reference number indicates the number of times the respective topic was searched. The user is more likely to find desired information in a topic with the largest reference number since that topic is the most popular topic. Therefore, searching the most popular topic first will improve the search efficiency and find desired information faster.

Regarding to claim 3, Ishimaru, Cole and Porter, Jr. teach all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 1, and further disclose a reference number update unit which increments by one the reference number of a topic when the user selects and/or refers to the topic among topics which are displayed by the search result display unit (Ishimaru, Fig. 2, S7, "Increment the Mark Number", col. 7, lines 1-5, Cole, col. 4, line 61- col. 5, line 7).

Regarding to claim 4, Ishimaru, Cole and Porter, Jr. teach all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 1, and further disclose a reference number update unit which increments by one the reference number of a topic displayed immediately before the user stops displaying of the search results (Ishimaru, Fig. 2, S7, “Increment the Mark Number”, col. 7, lines 1-5, Cole, col. 4, line 61- col. 5, line 7).

Regarding to claim 5, Ishimaru, Cole and Porter, Jr. teach all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 1, and further disclose the order of displaying the searched parts is a descending order of the reference number of the topics (Ishimaru, col. 7, lines 64-65).

Regarding to claim 6, Ishimaru, Cole and Porter, Jr. teach all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 1, and further disclose the order of searching is a descending order of the reference number of the topics (Porter, Jr. col. 1, lines 47-50).

Regarding to claim 7, Ishimaru, Cole and Porter, Jr. teach all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 1, and further disclose the reference number table is incorporated into the electronic manual (Ishimaru, Fig. 10, col. 7, lines 6-10).

Regarding to claim 8, Ishimaru, Cole and Porter, Jr. teach all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 1, and further disclose the reference number table stores the reference number for each user class (Ishimaru, Fig. 10).

As per claim 9, Ishimaru discloses an electronic manual search system comprising: an electronic manual composed of a plurality of topics (Ishimaru, Fig. 2 & 10, col. 1, lines 61-65, According to the specification, electronic dictionary can be referred to as “electronic manual”, page 2, 2nd & 3rd paragraph);

a reference number table which stores, for each topic, a reference number expressing the number of times the topic has been referred to by a user (Ishimaru, Fig. 2 & 10, col. 9, lines 44-67, "provides an electronic dictionary that can inform users of the number of times a search has been performed");

a search process unit which searches contents for satisfying a search condition (Ishimaru, Fig. 2).

Ishimaru doesn't explicitly disclose the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result, and the search process unit searches contents of each part in order based on the reference number.

Cole teaches the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result (Cole, col. 4, line 61- col. 5, line 7). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to automatically generate and record the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result in the system of Ishimaru. Automatically generating and recording reference number frees the user from the burden of manually entering reference number, and eliminates the possibility of human error involved in manually processing.

Porter, Jr. discloses searching based on the order of record key (Porter, Jr., col. 1, lines 47-50). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to search based on the order of reference number in the system of Ishimaru. The reference number indicates the number of times the respective topic was searched. The user is more likely to find desired information in a topic with the largest reference number since that

topic is the most popular topic. Therefore, searching the most popular topic first will improve the search efficiency and find desired information faster.

As per claim 10, Ishimaru discloses a method of searching an electronic manual which is composed of a plurality of topics, the method comprising the step of:

storing, for each topic, a reference number expressing the number of times the topic was referred to by a user (Ishimaru, Fig. 2 & 10, col. 9, lines 44-67, “provides an electronic dictionary that can inform users of the number of times a search has been performed”);

searching contents of the topics based on a search condition (Ishimaru, Fig. 2);

displaying topics which result from the searching step, in order based on the reference number (Ishimaru, col. 7, lines 64-65, “the words would be displayed on screen, sorted by search frequency in ascending or descending order”).

Ishimaru doesn't explicitly disclose the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result, and the search process unit searches contents of each part in order based on the reference number. Cole teaches the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result (Cole, col. 4, line 61- col. 5, line 7). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to automatically generate and record the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result in the system of Ishimaru. Automatically generating and recording reference number frees the user from the burden of manually entering reference number, and eliminates the possibility of human error involved in manually processing.

Porter, Jr. discloses searching based on the order of record key (Porter, Jr., col. 1, lines 47-50). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to search based on the order of reference number in the system of Ishimaru. The reference number indicates the number of times the respective topic was searched. The user is more likely to find desired information in a topic with the largest reference number since that topic is the most popular topic. Therefore, searching the most popular topic first will improve the search efficiency and find desired information faster.

Claim 12 is rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons given above for claim 5.

Claim 13 is rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons given above for claim 6.

As per claim 14, Ishimaru discloses a recording medium readable by a computer, tangibly embodying an electronic manual comprising:

a plurality of topics (Ishimaru, Fig. 5, According to the specification, electronic dictionary can be referred to as “electronic manual”, part is referred to as “topic”, page 2, 2nd & 3rd paragraph); and

a reference number of each topic, the reference number representing the number of times the corresponding topic was referred to as searched results (Ishimaru, Fig. 2 & 10, col. 9, lines 44-67, “provides an electronic dictionary that can inform users of the number of times a search has been performed”).

Ishimaru doesn't explicitly disclose the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result, and the search process unit searches contents of each part in order based on the reference number. Cole teaches the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times

the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result (Cole, col. 4, line 61- col. 5, line 7). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to automatically generate and record the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result in the system of Ishimaru. Automatically generating and recording reference number frees the user from the burden of manually entering reference number, and eliminates the possibility of human error involved in manually processing.

Porter, Jr. discloses searching based on the order of record key (Porter, Jr., col. 1, lines 47-50). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to search based on the order of reference number in the system of Ishimaru. The reference number indicates the number of times the respective topic was searched. The user is more likely to find desired information in a topic with the largest reference number since that topic is the most popular topic. Therefore, searching the most popular topic first will improve the search efficiency and find desired information faster.

As per claim 15, Ishimaru, Cole and Porter, Jr. teach all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 14, and further disclose the reference number is stored for each class of a user who refers to the topic as searched results (Ishimaru, col. 2, lines 31-32).

As per claim 16, Ishimaru, Cole and Porter, Jr. teach all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 17, and further disclose displaying topics which are obtained by the searching step as search results, in order based on the reference number (Ishimaru, col. 7, lines 64-65).

As per claim 17, Ishimaru discloses a recording medium readable by a computer, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the computer to perform a method of

searching an electronic manual which is composed of a plurality of topics, the method comprising the step of:

storing, for each part, a reference number expressing how many times the topic has been referred to by a user (Ishimaru, Fig. 2 & 10, col. 9, lines 44-67, "provides an electronic dictionary that can inform users of the number of times a search has been performed"); and searching contents of the topics for satisfying a search (Ishimaru, Fig. 2).

Ishimaru doesn't explicitly disclose the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result, and the search process unit searches contents of each part in order based on the reference number.

Cole teaches the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result (Cole, col. 4, line 61- col. 5, line 7). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to automatically generate and record the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result in the system of Ishimaru. Automatically generating and recording reference number frees the user from the burden of manually entering reference number, and eliminates the possibility of human error involved in manually processing.

Porter, Jr. discloses searching based on the order of record key (Porter, Jr., col. 1, lines 47-50). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to search based on the order of reference number in the system of Ishimaru. The reference number indicates the number of times the respective topic was searched. The user is more likely to find desired information in a topic with the largest reference number since that

topic is the most popular topic. Therefore, searching the most popular topic first will improve the search efficiency and find desired information faster.

As per claim 18, Ishimaru discloses a computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave and representing a sequence of instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform the actions of:

storing, for each topic of an electronic manual, a reference number expressing how many times the topic has been referred to by a user (Ishimaru, Fig. 2 & 10, col. 9, lines 44-67, “provides an electronic dictionary that can inform users of the number of times a search has been performed”);

searching contents of the topics for satisfying a search condition (Ishimaru, Fig. 2); and displaying topics which are obtained by the searching step as search results, in order based on the reference number (Ishimaru, col. 7, lines 64-65).

Ishimaru doesn't explicitly disclose the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result, and the search process unit searches contents of each part in order based on the reference number. Cole teaches the reference number is automatically generated and records the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result (Cole, col. 4, line 61- col. 5, line 7). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to automatically generate and record the number of times the respective topic in the past was referred to as a search result in the system of Ishimaru. Automatically generating and recording reference number frees the user from the burden of manually entering reference number, and eliminates the possibility of human error involved in manually processing.

Porter, Jr. discloses searching based on the order of record key (Porter, Jr., col. 1, lines 47-50). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to search based on the order of reference number in the system of Ishimaru. The reference number indicates the number of times the respective topic was searched. The user is more likely to find desired information in a topic with the largest reference number since that topic is the most popular topic. Therefore, searching the most popular topic first will improve the search efficiency and find desired information faster.

Claim 19 is rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons given above for claim 18.

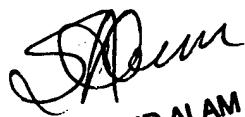
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Chongshan Chen whose telephone number is 703-305-8319. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (8:00 am - 4:30 pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kim Y Vu can be reached on (703)305-4393. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)305-3900.

November 12, 2003



SHAHID ALAM
PRIMARY EXAMINER